

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CEQ-01 EPA-01 INRE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

SS-15 NSC-05 OES-03 PA-01 PRS-01 USIE-00 SP-02 L-03

H-02 PM-04 /067 W

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O R 051814Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7567

INFO DOT WASHDC

FAA WASHDC

FAA BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US

SUBJ: INITIAL GOF REACTION TO CONCORDE DECISION

1. BELOW IS GOF REACTION THUS FAR TO SECRETARY
COLEMAN'S DECISION ON CONCORDE.

2. WHEN AMBASSADOR DELIVERED TEXT OF DECISION
LAST EVENING TO FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES,
LATTER RECEIVED NEWS WITH GREAT PLEASURE AND SAID
HE UNDERSTOOD COMPLETELY THE DECISION. SAUVAGNARGUES
HAD NO CRITICISM TO OFFER, BUT INSTEAD EXPRESSED
GRATITUDE FOR THE ACTION TAKEN.

3. DCM, ACCOMPANIED BY MINECON, DELIVERED COPY OF
DECISION SHORTLY THEREAFTER TO SECSTATE OF TRANSPORTA-
TION CAVAILLE. HIS IMMEDIATE REACTION WAS THAT
AUTHORIZATION LIMITED TO SIXTEEN MONTHS WOULD POSE
PROBLEMS IN MEANTIME FOR DECISION ON WHETHER TO
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EXTEND CONCORDE PRODUCTION RUN. (CAVAILLE'S REMARKS

AT TELEVISED PRESS CONFERENCE AN HOUR LATER ARE
REPORTED SEPTEL.)

4. BEFORE LEAVING EMBASSY WHERE THEY HAD ATTENDED
"ADVANCE READING" OF DECISION, LAGORCE, WHO IS ASSIS-
TANT TO DIRECTOR OF CONCORDE PROGRAM AT SGAC, AND
ESPEROU, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT AT SGAC,
EXPRESSED VIEW THAT DECISION WAS "NOT SO BAD" AND
"COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE". LAGORCE EXPRESSED VIEW
FRENCH WOULD WANT TO BE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH U.S.
MONITORING OF CONCORDE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AT JFK
AND DULLES. (INCIDENTALLY, OTHERS AT "READING"
WERE DE VAIVRE OF FOREIGN MINISTRY AND LUSH OF BRITISH
EMBASSY.)

5. LAGORCE PHONED US MORNING OF FEB 5 TO GIVE MORE
CONSIDERED REACTION. HE SAID THAT AFTER READING
TEXT OF DECISION, FRENCH WERE FULL OF ADMIRATION
FOR COLEMAN AND LANGUAGE IN WHICH DECISION WAS
COUCHED. HE SAID THAT FACT DECISION WAS NOT FULL
APPROVAL OF WHAT AIR FRANCE AND BRITISH AIRWAYS
HAS APPLIED FOR, HOWEVER, WAS OBVIOUSLY A DISAPPOINT-
MENT. FRENCH THOUGHT THEY HAD ARGUED THEIR CASE
PERSUASIVELY ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY UNQUALIFIED APPROVAL.
A PRACTICAL PROBLEM WAS NOW POSED FOR THE TWO
CARRIERS SINCE COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS TO NEW
YORK AND WASHINGTON, D.C. WOULD REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL
INVESTMENT ON THEIR PART AGAINST UNCERTAINTY WHETHER
THEY WOULD BE PERMITTED CONTINUE OPERATE THESE
ROUTES AFTER SIXTEEN MONTHS AND WITH RISK THAT
USG APPROVAL COULD EVEN BE WITHDRAWN IN MEANTIME.
AS A RESULT, CARRIERS WOULD CERTAINLY NOW ASK
GOVERNMENTS TO SHARE SOME OF COSTS INVOLVED IN
OPENING SERVICE ON THESE ROUTES. LAGORCE AGREED
THAT CARRIERS ANYWAY WOULD PROBABLY ASK GOVERNMENTS
TO HELP COVER ANY OPERATING LOSS THEY MIGHT INCUR
ON CONCORDE ROUTES, BUT NATURE OF COLEMAN DECISION
WOULD NOW STRENGTHEN HAND OF AIR FRANCE IN ASKING
EVEN LARGER MEASURE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM
GOF. MORE SERIOUS WAS UNCERTAINTY THAT WILL NOW
PERSIST OVER FUTURE OF CONCORDE PRODUCTION PROGRAM.
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IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT TO MARKET STILL UNSOLD
CONCORDES SO LONG AS THERE IS NO CERTAINTY CONCORDE
CAN OPERATE TO U.S. BEYOND SIXTEEN-MONTH PERIOD,
AND FOR SAME REASON IT WILL BE DIFFICULT IN THE
MEANTIME TO DECIDE WHETHER EXTEND PRODUCTION RUN
BEYOND SIXTEEN AIRCRAFT. IT MEANS SIXTEEN MORE
MONTHS OF WAITING. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LEDGER,
HOWEVER, SAID LAGORCE, IS THE FACT THAT THE SIXTEEN

MONTHS WILL ENABLE AIR FRANCE TO DEMONSTRATE THE
COMMERCIAL WORTH OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THE FACT IT
WILL NOT REALLY HAVE SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE
ENVIRONMENT. LAGORCE SUMMED UP WITH THESE WORDS:
"WE ARE CONTENT WITH THE DECISION, SUBJECT TO SOME
RESERVATIONS." (COMMENT: IT WAS LAGORCE WHO
BRIEFED CAVAILLE ON COLEMAN DECISION PRIOR CAVAILLE'S
PRESS CONFERENCE - HENCE THE SIMILARITY OF VIEWS.)

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6. WE SOUGHT REACTION OF ABRAHAM OF SGAC, WHO HAD
HEADED FRENCH DEL TO SECRETARY COLEMAN'S JAN. 5
HEARING. ABRAHAM WAS UNAVAILABLE BUT ESPEROU, WHO
HAD TALKED WITH HIM EARLIER IN THE DAY AFTER ABRAHAM
HAD READ DECISION, SAID ABRAHAM WAS "VERY SATISFIED."
ABRAHAM TOO WAS CONCERNED BY CERTAIN ASPECTS OF

DECISION (ALONG LINES CAVAILLE AND LAGORCE REACTION)
AND ALSO VERY MUCH AWARE OF PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT
STILL LIE AHEAD IN THE COURTS AND IN CONGRESS.
ABRAHAM HAD BEEN ESPECIALLY IMPRESSED BY THE QUALITY
OF THE DECISION AND INTENDED CONVEY MESSAGE OF THANKS
AND CONGRATULATIONS TO SECRETARY COLEMAN VIA FRENCH
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.

7. REACTIONS OF HEADS OF NATIONALIZED COMPANIES
AEROSPATIALE AND AIR FRANCE, WHILE NOT GOF SPOKESMEN
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STRICTLY SPEAKING, MIGHT ALSO BE CITED IN THIS LISTING.
GEN. JACQUES MITTERAND OF AEROSPATIALE WELCOMED
COLEMAN DECISION AS "POSITIVE STEP" THOUGH HE
WOULD HAVE PREFERRED NO TIME LIMIT ON AUTHORIZATION.
AS IT IS, DECISION ON WHETHER CONTINUE CONCORDE
PROGRAM WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN BEFORE END OF THAT
SIXTEEN-MONTH PERIOD. GIRAUDET OF AIR FRANCE SAID
USG DECISION CAME TOO LATE TO PERMIT COMMENCEMENT
CONCORDE SERVICE TO NEW YORK EARLY APRIL AND NEW
YORK PORT AUTHORITY APPROVAL WAS STILL REQUIRED.
IN CASE LATTER APPROVAL WAS DELAYED AIR FRANCE WOULD
BEGIN WASHINGTON SERVICE FIRST.

8. FRENCH RADIO REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT GISCARD,
WHO WAS FIFTY YEARS OLD FEB. 3, HAD SAID COLEMAN
DECISION ON CONCORDE WAS BEST BIRTHDAY PRESENT HE
COULD HAVE RECEIVED.

9. AFP'S SUMMING UP OF FRENCH OFFICIAL REACTION TO
COLEMAN DECISION: "SATISFACTION BUT NO FEELING OF
TRIUMPH."
RUSH

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